



HENDERSON COUNTY

HEALTH NEWSLETTER

DEPARTMENT Issue 23 : February 2026



★ AMERICAN ★
HEART MONTH
FEBRUARY

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The Henderson County Health Department is implementing Heart Month 2026 by extending the gym hours of operation on Tuesdays and Thursdays to 6:00 p.m. for the next few months. Please share this message.

Heart Month 2026 is a month-long initiative focused on heart health and cardiovascular disease prevention. It aims to educate individuals about the importance of maintaining a healthy heart and making lifestyle choices that support cardiovascular well-being. Heart disease remains a leading cause of death worldwide, and this observance seeks to reduce its impact through awareness and action to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Heart disease is largely preventable, yet many people remain at risk of getting heart disease. The good news is that by taking care of your heart, you can take care of your family, friends, and future. Simple changes to diet, exercise, and regular follow-up with your doctor can go a long way to improving your heart health. Our hearts are healthier together so make a plan with family and friends to get heart healthy and track your progress.



Josie Lair, New Henderson County Health Department Administrator, Visits with Dedicated Exercisers at HCHD Gym

The Board of Henderson County Health Department Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Josie Lair, MSN, RN, as the agency's new administrator, effective January 5, 2026. Josie brings over 20 years of professional experience as a Registered Nurse providing complex critical nursing care for people receiving inpatient and outpatient services. She currently serves as the Clinical Practice Coordinator of the Western Region for OSF Healthcare where she provides support for new mission partners, assists operations in change management for new practices and workflow, collaborates with other disciplines to educate and support frontline staff and nurses while working to identify opportunities for improved patient care and outcomes.

Josie earned her baccalaureate and master's degrees in nursing from Chamberlain University in Downers Grove, Illinois. Vocationally she maintains leadership and membership in several professional medical associations. She also serves in leadership positions as a volunteer in a variety of regional organizations that represent her family's shared interests and her hobbies. Josie is the mother of four young adult (and almost adult) children. Josie lives in Monmouth, but she enjoys family ties with extended family in Henderson County.

Josie is committed to ensuring that all residents, regardless of background or circumstance, have access to the resources they need to live a healthy life. She is excited to meet the residents of Henderson County and to work alongside the health department's dedicated staff and partners to build a healthier, more resilient Henderson County.

HEALTHY IS STRONG!!

Every year, Americans suffer more than 1.5 million heart attacks and strokes. As part of HCHD's commitment to Heart Month, the agency will be featuring a different heart healthy recipe to taste on the following Tuesdays: Feb. 10, 17, and 24.

In the 2025 Men's Health Assessment for Illinois an alarming amount, **25.6%**, of men in Illinois are physically inactive weekly. HCHD is going to focus on Men's Health to raise awareness and promote positive action on a variety of issues that are specific to men, such as prostate and testicular cancers, as well as disparities in health outcomes for chronic conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure, unintentional injuries, and suicide.

American Heart Month and Valentine's Day are celebrated in February. As these two hearts beat as one, here's the skinny on celebrating the end of the month. Quiet Day is observed on February 25th. Taking a pause and appreciating the sound of silence helps to calm our bodies and recenter ourselves. February 27th is National Protein Day. Our bodies need protein to stay fit throughout all stages of life and is one of the body's most basic building blocks. No Brainer Day, also observed on February 27th, is a terrific reminder to take it easy and not fret too much when a situation becomes difficult. As Confucius said, "Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated."

HAPPY FEBRUARY!!

HC COMMUNITY PANTRY EXCITING NEWS

The pantry at the Henderson County Health Department is now open until 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays in conjunction with the extended open gym.

The average guest who comes to the pantry for food is an elderly male or woman who lives alone or has a spouse.

There has been an increase in families with one or two children who started coming to the pantry in June of 2025.

Lately, single women in their forties and fifties are saying their salaries are not covering the increase in the cost of living.

We are asking for food donations in February that 'MEAT' the need to feed the hungry with high protein foods:

Canned chicken, salmon, and tuna.

Peanut butter, jelly, and bread.

Canned soups, crackers, and cheese.

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Business  Hours:

Monday – Thursday:

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Friday: 8:00a.m. - Noon

Event	Time & Date	Location
Free Bingo	1:00 to 3:00 Wednesday February 4th & 18th	Henderson County Health Department
Low Impact Exercise (Free) No registration required	Mon-Wed-Fri 8:00am-9:00am	Henderson County Health Department
Fit and Strong! Exercise Class (Free)	Mon-Wed-Fri 9:30 am to 10:30 am	Stronghurst Senior Center
Free Card Games	Tuesdays	Henderson County
Board Games	Noon	Health Department
Lomax-Carman Senior Citizens Potluck HC Community Pantry	4 th Thursday of the Month at 11:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Lomax Senior Center 911 E. Main Street Lomax Senior Center
Jigsaw Puzzles	Week Days	HC Health Dept.
HCHD GYM OPEN	TUESDAY NIGHT	HENDERSON COUNTY
ADDITIONAL HOURS	THURSDAY NIGHT	HEALTH DEPARTMENT
FREE * FREE * FREE	4:00 TO 6:00 P.M.	FREE WATER
NO PRE-REGISTRATION	PANTRY OPEN	FREE COFFEE